

levy sugar under the PDS has been increased from 425 gms. to 500 gms., which would benefit the people below poverty line.

**Treating Swarna Masuri variety of paddy as 'A' grade in Andhra Pradesh**

**157. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY:** Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the Food Corporation of India has not treated the "Swarna Masuri" variety of paddy as 'A' grade variety in Andhra Pradesh;
- (b) whether inspite of instructions from the higher authorities in this regard the local purchasing staff was not following the instructions;
- (c) whether this has resulted in difficulties to the paddy growers in the State; and
- (d) whether any fresh instructions would be issued to the concerned officials to be careful in future?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHIRAM CHAUHAN):** (a) and (b) As per the existing system of classification of paddy/rice varieties based on Length/Breadth (L/B) ratio, Swarna Masuri (MTU-7029) variety of paddy grown in Andhra Pradesh was not found conforming to the L/B ratio applicable to Grade 'A' during the current Kharif Marketing Season 2000-2001. However, considering the request of the Government of Andhra Pradesh, the Government has allowed procurement of Swarna Masuri variety of paddy at the price applicable to grade 'A' i.e. Rs. 540/-per quintal. The Government has also allowed procurement of all varieties of Grade 'A' rice, including Swarna Masuri both raw and parboiled with admixture of lower class upto a maximum limit of 13% as against the limit of 10% provided under the uniform (FAQ) specification in Andhra Pradesh operative upto 31.3.2001.